

Difficulties In Translating Khrushchev Comments Cited

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Washington, Aug. 7 (AP) — Would you know what Nikita S. Khrushchev meant if he said "The best way to get rid of bedbugs is to pour hot water in their ears?"

That was one of the puzzlers for Alexander Akalovsky, who served as interpreter on Vice President Nixon's trip to the Soviet Union and Poland.

Khrushchev used the Russian proverb about bedbugs to ridicule complicated kitchen gadgets at the United States exhibit in Moscow. It was during the explosive Nixon-Khrushchev argument.

Akalovsky says he translated it: "Why use simple methods when you can use complicated ones?"

Quite A Task

The Yugoslavian-born translator, 35, said it was quite a task to avoid pitfalls when translating the comments of Khrushchev and Nixon.

He recalled that Nixon gave him a hard time by using a phrase that sounds simple enough in English: "The pioneer spirit of Novosibirsk." The trouble is that in Russian, pioneer means something like Boy Scout.

So Akalovsky, instead of informing the people of Novosibirsk that Nixon thought they had a fine Boy Scout spirit, told them

Nixon praised their "spirit of conquering new horizons."

The translator confesses he once convulsed a students' meeting by interpreting a Soviet speaker's plea for banning nuclear weapons "so the people of the world could rest in peace."

Linguist Lauded

Akalovsky has been in the State Department's languages service division four years, has interpreted discussions of everything from the habits of fur seals to hydrogen bombs.

When the Nixon plane landed here, there were signs in Russian saying "Welcome Home" and "Congratulations on Your Success." They weren't for Nixon, however. They were from Akalovsky's fellow linguists at the State Department, welcoming him home from a tough assignment.